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klipsun

November 1983





Blair Koolstra

Volume 14, Number 3
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Klipsun is a Lummi Indian word
meaning "beautiful sunset."

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North for the Season

by Karen McCrackin

Compared to three months ago, Alaska's cannery towns and coastal ports are deserted. "Termination dust," that first snow signaling the end of production and the beginning of unemployment, settled in weeks ago, chasing the last non-resident workers south. But come April, when green shoots push through the ice, rivers change from white to deep blue and salmon arrive as predictably as the tourists, Alaska will open its doors to a stampede of out-of-state workers. A year's worth of work will be jammed into six months.

It happens every year.

"It's a trait of Alaska to work feverishly in the summer" after the long winter, said seasoned worker Brian Blix, a 1981 Western graduate.

With Alaska situated 480 miles up the coast from Bellingham, and with jobs offering long hours, a short season and decent wages, Western students like Blix head north for the summer.

Some go by bus or car up the Alaska Highway. Others take a three-day ferry excursion through the "inside passage," to southeastern Alaska and farther. There they find work driving tour buses, felling timber, canning salmon, waiting tables, fighting fires, managing the back-country and hauling in the salmon.

For many, the income will pay next year's tuition, room and board. A summer's work can bring in as much as \$10,000, or as little as \$1,500. It depends, of course, on the type and the length of the job. Generally, since fishermen are paid on percentage of the boat's take, they are most often the highest paid seasonal employees. Tourism and cannery work follow close behind.

Blix said he didn't earn a lot of money when he worked in a cannery. But he made up for his small income by living in log houses

or small shacks and by doing without a car.

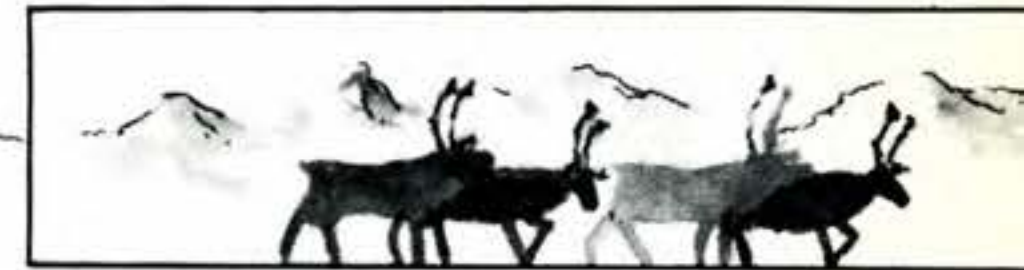
"In cannery work, especially, it's hard to make good money," he said. "If you're frugal, you might be able to save up to \$2,000. And getting on the (fishing) boats is hard.

"But I didn't go to Alaska to make money. I went to get away from crowded and overly economic-oriented conditions of the Lower 48."

Sally Toteff, a Huxley College student and six-year veteran of Alaskan canneries, echoed Blix's sentiments. "The best part is getting away from the mad rush, freeway traffic, blaring TV. (In Alaska) your perspective on the world narrows. The momentum of the city life gets tuned out."

John Hammelman, a 1983 Huxley College graduate and two-year Alaskan summer veteran, said he at first thought Alaska lacked social advantages and modern conveniences. "The first year I didn't think I'd ever go back. It's like America 50 years ago."

But Hammelman, like many, has changed his mind. After spending his first Alaskan summer fishing 150 miles south of Anchorage in the Cook Inlet, he set out with a friend on a hunting trip in the Kenai Peninsula Fjord area and the Chugach Mountain Range.



"I found out it wasn't as remote as I had made it out to be," he said. "But it does take a while to get the feel of the place. It's not just like going into another state. It's like going into another country..."

"I love it now. This summer I decided to move there. The people I met are open, warm and helpful, and it's a place you can go to get ahead."

People in canneries largely are drawn from Alaska and the Puget Sound, Toteff said, but they come from places such as Africa, New Zealand and southeastern Asia, too.

"It's usually a young population that goes up there," Toteff said. "People relax there. Year after year you get a core of people, and if you're one of those returnees, there's that common bond and closeness that lasts even after you leave."

That closeness may be formed, in part, because of the long hours spent working together. In fact, if people come away with fat paychecks, it's only because of the overtime hours accumulated during the peak of the season. Canners often pay only \$5 to \$6.50 an hour, but overtime pays time-and-a-half.

Toteff said the longest stretch she ever worked was 24 hours straight, but during typical peaks, she said, the crew worked about 16 hours a day.

Rick Lipscomb, a Western math major, worked on a fishing boat in 1981. At some points his boat would fish 72 hours straight, with the crew rotating between sleep and work shifts.

"You work your ass off," agreed Western business major Tom Baldridge, who worked as a driver-guide from the beginning of June to mid-September. "You usually average close to 70 hours a week, working six days a week."

"When you're working real long hours, a 10-plus shift, you get a charge from pushing yourself to your physical limits," Toteff said. "When the peak hits, those are your longest days. But you know the peak won't last forever, although it could be hard and strong. There's something exhilarating in the fact that you can push yourself hard for 16 hours a day and still have a sense of humor and your sanity."

"After a while it gets to the point where I've seen women crying just because they're so tired, and then they break."

Lipscomb said after his fishing venture he slept for two days solid to recover. His skipper repeatedly placed the crew in life-threatening situations in order to keep pulling in the fish, so Lipscomb and another crew member quit a week after the peak was over. His skipper angrily cut Lipscomb's percentage of the take from 15 to 8 percent — a cut of \$10,000.

Lack of sleep often caused dangerous "mental errors," he said. A moving net sometimes offered the only balance on the choppy waters.

"I don't think I'll ever face a situation with so much pressure on me," Lipscomb said. "It was very risky, and took a toll on me. I finally decided my life was worth more than \$10,000. The whole time I fished I had only a total of two to three days off."

Fred Ondeck, a job developer for Western's Part-Time Student Employment Center, warned that

students should be aware of what's involved in working in Alaska before they go up. "Some have had good experiences, and some haven't," he said. "It's hard to predict."

On the opposite end of the 80-hour work-week spectrum, Ondeck said students often get up to Alaska only to be disappointed by a small run and a short season or by striking fishermen.

"Some people have heard weird and wonderful stories," he said, "but there are many misconceptions. You don't always make a ton of money, and once your application is in, you're one of hundreds and hundreds."

"Going up to Alaska without a job is taking a chance monetarily. I tell people to make sure they have money to go both ways. There's no guarantees — the season can fluctuate a lot."

Hammelman is more optimistic. "The job prospects are good if you hang around a cannery," he said. "If you don't find a job in Alaska, you're not trying."

Joe Ordonez, a 1983 Huxley College graduate, had no guarantees when he went up to Alaska last summer. He found work through employment agencies or by showing up on doorsteps. Ordonez worked as a back-packing guide in Denali National Park, a frozen fish packer in Kenai, a cannery worker in Kodiak and a restaurant host-cashier in Skagway.

"If you don't find a job in Alaska, you're not trying."

"It was a matter of being at the right place at the right time," Ordonez said. But he warned that unless people go up without a guaranteed job, they'd better be financially prepared. Alaskan prices are 25 percent higher than prices in the Lower 48.

"You gotta know what you're in for," he said. "You take a chance. I could have come back with no money, but I was prepared to do that."

Ordonez advised prospective workers to prearrange their work

Finding Work in Alaska

While jobs exist in Alaska, they are not always easy to find. Your best bet is to be persistent. Write, phone or meet directly with prospective employers early in the season.

The following sketch is taken from "Summer Employment Opportunities in AK," a free leaflet available by writing ALASCO, P.O. Box 2573, Saratoga, CA. 95070-0573.

Canneries — Salmon season usually runs June through August paying workers \$5.00 to \$6.50 /hour. A typical work week is 80 hours long, with time-and-a-half paid for overtime. Visit, write or call the canneries for specifics on wages, hours, housing, etc. Addresses are available in the Student Employment Center, Old Main 260.

Fishing — Many Alaskan fishing boats leave directly from Seattle's Fisherman's Wharf. Although the work is long and tiring, the money can be good — \$10,000 to \$12,000 for a three to six-month season. "Pounding the docks" is the best way to get a job. Ask skippers directly.

Tourism — The season runs May to September, with the majority of openings in hotel, lodge and restaurant work. No experience is required, but the pay is low — \$170 to \$250/week. For an extensive list of employer addresses, visit the Student Employment Center, Old Main 260.

Construction — In construction you'll find the highest wages. However, most of the industry is governed by union hiring practices. Contact your local for current job information. Visit or call non-union companies directly.

National Park Service — Although highly competitive, summer positions as park technicians, park aids or park rangers are available in several regions. Write: Seasonal Employment Unit, 18th and C St., Washington, D.C. 20240 for application 10-139.

Also, check Alaska's newspaper's classifieds for valuable job leads.

through Seattle-based fishing, tour and cannery offices.

"Apply early for whatever kind of job you want and get a place that gives you room and board, or you'll live in a tent and pay higher prices for groceries."

Ondeck recommended people sign a contract that will guarantee hours, pay passage up and back, and allow for some sort of room and board arrangements before they leave. Above all, check out the situation before you dive into it.

If you have a choice, getting paid by the hour is preferable to monthly rates, Ondeck said. Although you'll be more vulnerable to the fish run, canneries won't be so free to exploit your labor by working you long hours. Lipscomb said he was once in a processing boat in the Yukon-Delta area and made only \$1,200 for the entire summer. "I felt I got cheated out of my working worth," he said. "I got

paid monthly instead of an hourly rate — I'll never make that mistake again."

The rate of returnees is high — everyone interviewed except Lipscomb said they planned to return to Alaska at some point. The work in the canneries may be monotonous, but the beauty of Alaska seems to compensate. Housing may mean living in a tent for the summer, but jobs can be found and money is usually saved. As long as people research just what the trade-offs will be, the summer will likely be successful.

The advantage of checking out information early is that chances for success are much more probable...before Alaska's thaw and spring's rejuvenation. Before the green patches outnumber the ice-blue. Before activity is humming again. Before the jobs are grabbed up.

It happens every year.●

"The Touching Problem"

By Mark Murphy



Photographs by John Klicker

With more than a thousand eyes watching intently, Sandra Kleven places both hands on her hips and shouts, "Don't touch me there." Five hundred young voices echo hers in the large, hollow, grade school gymnasium.

When the Western Washington University graduate completed a senior project on the use of drama as an educational tool in 1980, she never thought she'd be an Emmy award-winning script-writer with national recognition just three years later.

Kleven is the director of the S.O.A.P. Box Players, a Bellingham-based group of volunteers using

drama to help children, parents and teachers handle the sensitive problem of sexual abuse.

When Sandra Kleven talks about avoiding uncomfortable touching, children listen. When the S.O.A.P. Box Players act it out, they understand.

Back at her desk in the busy Holly Street office shared with the Coalition for Child Advocacy, Kleven plays the dual role of administrator and mother. She comfortably nurses the youngest of her four sons while talking about the importance of her project. Over a cacophony of typewriters and phones, she explains that the touring show her group presents in towns

throughout the Northwest delivers an important message. It teaches children to say "no" to adults.

"Telling children how to protect themselves is a vital message," Kleven stresses. "Theater is one of the best ways to communicate that message." When she speaks, her eyes open wide, and her mouth curves into a comforting smile. The excitement and love she feels for her work show in her bright, animated facial expressions. She is a surprising 38 years old.

Above: S.O.A.P. Box Players Sandra Kleven and Leaf Schuman use humor to set children at ease in telling "Jimmie's Bedtime Story."



Shortly after graduation from Western's Human Services Program, Kleven applied for and was awarded basic funding from the VISTA program to develop the S.O.A.P. Box Players (S.O.A.P. stands for Serious Overtures About People).

Working through the Coalition for Child Advocacy, a division of the Whatcom County Opportunity Council, she developed "The Touching Problem." This short drama shows teachers and parents how to handle sexually abused children and help them protect themselves against uncomfortable touching. Today, the drama has expanded into a 90-minute touring

production. The video version, produced with KVOS-TV, won an Emmy award in January 1982.

"The first live performance was so well received, I knew then that we'd be a success," Kleven remembers. "They thought we were really actors and actresses." She looks toward the window as she recalls the group's first performance during a ten-minute beginning and dramatic skit. She glows now when she talks about the professional quality of their half-hour TV production. "After I saw the videotape we made, I was blown away. I thought 'Hey, this is going to make us famous!'"

It did.

The video version of "The Touching Problem," which shows how a young girl handles uncomfortable touching by a visiting uncle, started out as a \$1,400 DSHS-funded educational film for adults. After nearly a year's work and a contribution of about \$15,000 worth of KVOS' time and equipment, the project grew into much more. Not only did it win an Emmy, but it is now being distributed internationally by a Chicago teleprogram marketing company. The script and curriculum guide are being used by teachers nationwide. Money from the sales of these products is used to help fund more S.O.A.P. projects.

Not until January 1983 did the S.O.A.P. Box players revise their show to reach directly to children, rather than adults. They started performing "Soap Box Sense," a program for elementary school children, and a breakthrough that made Kleven nervous.

"We deal with pretty sensitive material in a straightforward way. I kept waiting for a call from an angry parent, but we've performed for more than 3,500 children so far, and all I've heard are positive comments."

Kleven found that theater reaches the children in ways that "just talking can't. When you're talking to a child, you communicate mainly on one level," she explains. "Theater is both visual and emotional, as well as aural."

Through her work, Kleven has found that the connections between psychology, education and theater often go unnoticed. "It's unfortunate drama is under-used as an education tool," she explained. "It's been proven to be effective. In role playing you learn to deal with real-life situations, and people naturally use modeling of appropriate behavior to teach."

"I'm glad theater is infringing on the mental health field."

"Soap Box Sense" is a collection of short vignettes with titles like "Jimmie's Bedtime Story" and "Annie Talks to Her Teacher." In them, the audience sees the characters learn important lessons, and as a result, the audience learns too.



"When Jimmie's mother tells him how to avoid unwanted touching, or the teacher assures a sexually-abused Annie that she has no reason to feel any guilt, something can click. That real life situation helps us see our own lives...it triggers memories of similar experience. And the humor we use sets children at ease," Kleven said.

The six-member company (there have been as many as 11) is able to combine a "need to do service out of concern for children with their love of theater." One member is a teacher and therapist. Another, Jane Osborne, is a Western student majoring in Urban and Regional Planning. "It really feels good," Osborne said. "I feel like we are really having an impact on the children and helping them. Performing is a lot of fun, too. I love the sound of applause."

The group's stage-sense comes from Kleven, a lifelong theater fan. In 1969 she performed street theater with a more entertainment-oriented objective. As a member of Seattle's "Sherwood Forest Mime Troupe and Medicine Show," she helped write and perform short

skits with fantasy themes.

Today, Kleven's scripts tell children five basic things: You can say 'no' to uncomfortable touching. Certain parts of your body are private, and no one has any right to touch them. You shouldn't be afraid to come right out and say someone touched your "private parts." And, most importantly, "it's not your fault." As she recites the messages, her eyes make you feel as though you could tell her anything, and she'd understand.

When Kleven shares facts that show that 20 to 29 percent of all children are victims of some form of sexual abuse or molestation, she clearly is concerned. She speaks in higher notes to underline the statistics, reminding her listener that she's used to talking with children, and her presentation is always sincere.

"One out of four girls and one boy in 10 will be victims of sexual abuse," she said. "The damaging effects of an experience like that can be lifelong. It's hard for someone introduced to sex that way to make sense of it later in life. I'd like to think I can help prevent that."

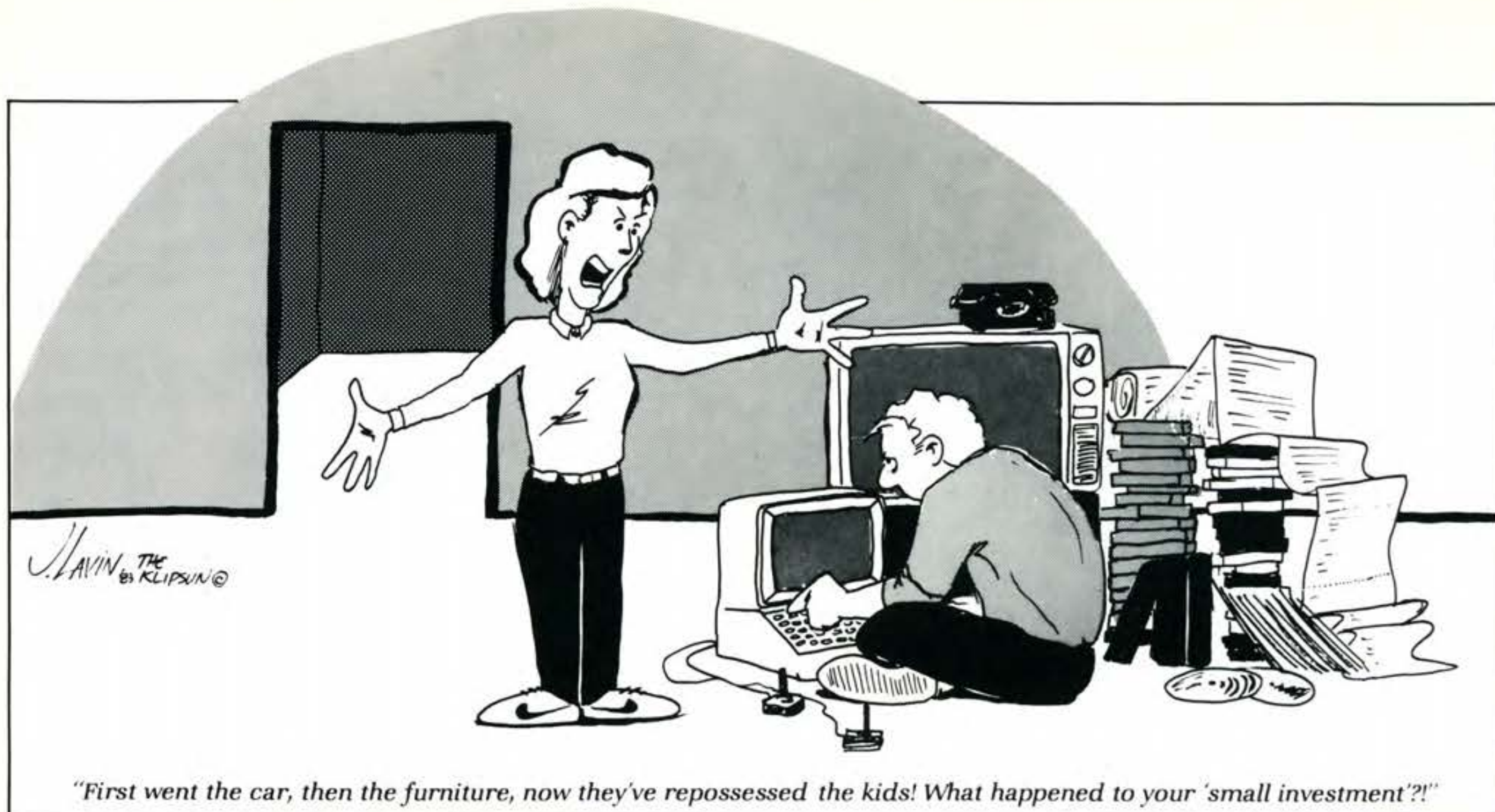
Kleven's performances do have an impact. One immediate result is the loosening of children's inhibitions. After one of the group's first elementary school shows, six young girls came up to her, each with their own story of abuse.

The S.O.A.P. Box Players continue to perform in the schools with the help of grant money from the Northwest Area Foundation, doing an average of four or five shows a month for as many as 500 children each performance. "It's very satisfying," Kleven says, leaning back in her chair. Then she sits up again. "It's a lot of fun, too."

What's next? "I'm thinking of putting together a similar project for pregnant teen-agers," she announces. You can tell she already has a head full of ideas. "After all, this sort of thing really works."

"I love doing it." ●

Left: A straightforward approach to sexual abuse was the kind of "S.O.A.P. Box Sense" that made scriptwriter Sandra Kleven nervous but famous. Above: Children from Custer Elementary School.



"First went the car, then the furniture, now they've repossessed the kids! What happened to your 'small investment'?"

Home Computer Ware

Programmed to cost you more...

by Richard Bourcier

Computers as business help-mates are fact. Now tons of money are being spent on round-the-clock advertisements to convince the public that computers belong in the home. Bill Cosby hawks them on television for Texas Instruments; Isaac Asimov appears in slick magazine ads on behalf of Radio Shack. Even the giants such as Sears and IBM are pushing computers hard, proving that nothing is more powerful than a businessman's idea that his product's time has come.

But it's perhaps best to take a long, hard look at the products, promises and even conditions within the industry before being swept away by computermania.

Personal computer ads, like most advertisements, attempt to instill a sense of need. Many computer ads follow a Baptist minister's tack of offering heaven to those who listen and fear or guilt to those who don't.

The "carrot" approach suggests that, like a good deodorant soap, computers will provide a clear advantage in the quest for success.

"Take stock in your future...Keep ahead of what's happening around you...Your life begins moving briskly toward tomorrow," intones Atari. "The power is within your reach," mimics Timex. The message is clear: Knowledge will be available at our fingertips, as creativity and productivity are enhanced and time will be saved as certain tasks become easier, thanks to this educational tool that will, apparently, turn us all into geniuses.

The "stick" approach implies that parents who don't buy a computer risk turning their children into "computer illiterates." "Invest in your children's future," say Commodore ads, so they "become computer literate, which will be so important later on in their lives," echoes a father in a Dow Jones News/Retrieval data bank service ad.

If neither of those tactics work, the supposedly low cost of computing might. The Texas Instrument 99/2, the Timex Sinclair TS 1000 and the Commodore VIC-20 can be brought for less than \$100.

These units are little more than a keyboard console that can be hooked up to a television, assuming you own one, taking the place of a video monitor. Yet, if greater screen resolution is needed, a separate monitor must be purchased. And so begins a long list of costly options or "peripherals," as they are called, that keep the computer store cash registers clicking.

Extra functions such as word processing, printouts, hook-ups to data banks, more memory capacity, a "tablet" and electronic pencil for computer graphics and even a "joy stick" for operating video games all will cost extra. Lots extra. And that's just for the "hardware," the electronic components of the system. The cost of "software" instructing the computer what to do also is additional. Don't forget special paper for the printer, operating books and instructions, the cost of electricity, maintenance and repairs as well.

Customers thinking they can get into computing for \$100 might spend 5 to 40 times more. Jack M.

Nilles, director of the Office of Information Technology of the Center of Future Research at the University of Southern California, and writing in the Dec. 27, 1983 *U.S. News and World Report*, said:

"The minimum investment is going to be on the order of \$500. Typically, owners of personal computers end up spending \$3,000 or \$4,000 by the time they get their system going to their satisfaction."

Roark Holz, a salesperson for Bellingham Computer Center, said his customers' costs average from \$600 to \$1,000 because most of them want to add a word processor and printer.

"Taking stock in your future" with a \$100 computer simply won't do. The cheaper model's "limited memory, slow-cassette recorder system and poor resolution on your television screen make it impractical for handling and displaying large amounts of data," wrote William J. Hawkins in the Nov. 1982 *Popular Science*.

The home computer industry also is fast-paced and rapidly changing, with price wars being fought in order to gain control of the market. Industry shake-downs are occurring, and today's Apple may become tomorrow's lemon, or today's Osborne tomorrow's Studebaker.

As an example, Texas Instrument's gamble — to sell high-volume, no-profit personal computers and then make up the loss by selling software — has failed. In the Oct. 29, 1983 issue of the *New York Times*, it was reported that Texas Instruments decided to suspend its line of personal computers after suffering a \$500 million loss over the last two quarters.

Because of rapid technological development, computer owners might face being stuck with outmoded gear. *Better Homes and Gardens* in March 1983 wrote that programs contained in "cassettes may be eliminated from most computers within the next year or so" because of their slow start-up time and susceptibility to "glitches" or foul-ups. This may be just as well for the people who expect to save time balancing their checkbooks and

discover the cassette-equipped computer takes 10 to 15 minutes each and every time before the program appears on the monitor.

Also, little standardization of hardware and software exists in an industry that, ironically, promotes its product as a model of efficiency. That is one reason why most experts recommend potential buyers choose a brand with the types of programs that will be used the most. Once a certain brand is bought, only software compatible with that brand will work. Apple's nifty home accounting course may not work on your Atari.

It's almost as ridiculous as being able to buy only one or two brands of records for each different brand of stereo. Perhaps this will change as industry shake-downs continue, or as government regulations or voice-activated computers come on line.

Since owners are stuck with using compatible software, Texas Instruments and others have good reason to sell their hardware at cut-throat prices. William S. Rukeyser, managing editor of *Fortune* magazine, said during a recent broadcast on KIRO radio that only 5 percent of the final price of software goes into making software.

Time magazine, even as it praised the computer in its Jan. 7, 1983 issue as "Machine of the Year," noted:

"Software can be a major difficulty...Good programs are expensive

modem must be purchased to link your computer to data banks via the telephone, assuming you still can afford a phone. If you're lucky, the modem will hook up directly to your phone. If not, a special adapter must be purchased. To use data banks, a registration fee is required, plus a user fee. User fees range from \$6 an hour for CompuServ up to \$300 an hour for Dialog — a service combining more than 150 data banks offering specialized and technical information.

An ad for the Dow Jones News/Retrieval information service depicts a family clustered around a computer with a smiling father proudly claiming "the whole family is enjoying it (Dow Jones) in ways I never imagined." His son uses the sports data base while his daughter calls up for movie reviews.

The cost? A mere \$12 to \$36 an hour.

Not all data banks can be reached with a local telephone call, either. CompuServ, one of the cheaper services, requires the added expense of long-distance phone calls from many cities, including Bellingham. "I know a person who had a \$180 phone bill," Holz said. One wonders whether the beaming Dow Jones father "imagined" such enjoyment could cost so much. Perhaps he would be better off giving his kids a library card or 25 cents for a newspaper.

Once, extremely expensive computers belonged only to the pow-

"Many of the programs now being touted are hardly worth the cost, or hardly worth doing at all."

— Time Magazine

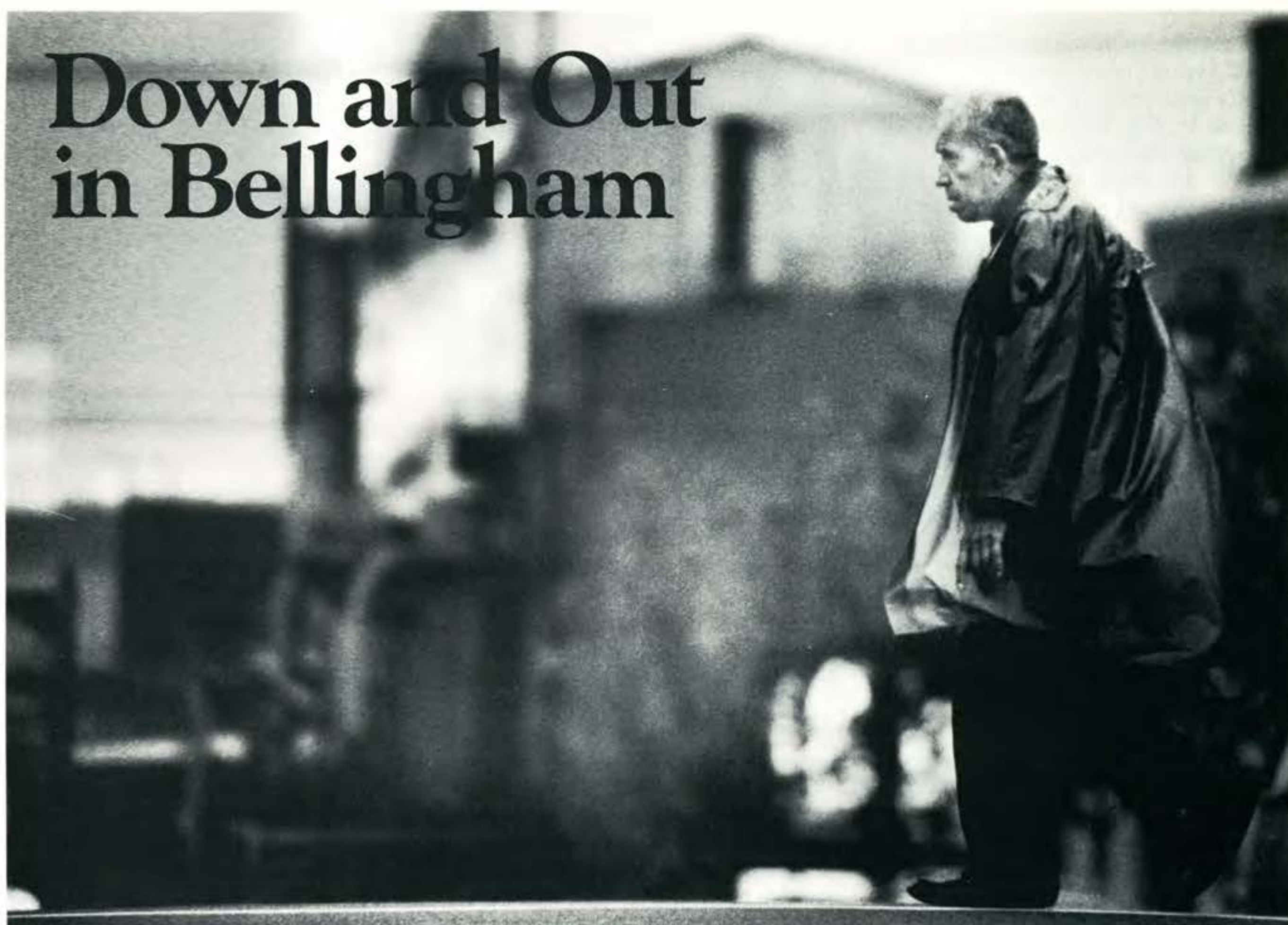
both to make and to buy...Many of the programs now being touted are hardly worth the cost, or hardly worth doing at all."

It's as if the computer companies are giving away free hypodermic needles and then selling "stepped-on" dope.

Another selling point computer companies use is the hook-up to information services called data banks, located in other parts of the country. Again, what's not mentioned is the added cost of such services. An extra peripheral called a

erful and rich elite. First to use them were the government and military. Next in line were the giant corporations, large companies, wealthy individuals, small companies and now the middle class. With predictions that seven out of 10 homes will be computer-equipped by 1990, the cutoff point apparently will fall along class lines. The "haves" will have computers and the "have-nots" won't, for it seems hard to conceive someone buying something they can't afford, to keep track of things they'll never own. ●

Down and Out in Bellingham



Photographs by Casey Madison

by Diane Dietz

3 CASES: Kathy Coulsell

Kathy Coulsell has penetrating brown eyes. The penetration is not uncomfortable. At 35, she has seen the smallness and largeness of people. Nothing seems to surprise her.

She sat on the sun porch at the Agape Christian home, one heel hooked on the edge of her chair, knee to chest. Kathy is short, not much over 5 feet, and thin, and it's hard to imagine how she survived 22 years on the streets. She lit a Camel filter and explained.

Kathy readily admits that she was an alcoholic and a drug abuser. She began at 14. She has taken "anything and everything...street drugs, scripts and my own home inventions." Her favorite combination

was speed, pot and whiskey. Whiskey she drank because she liked the effect, speed kept her from passing out, and pot kept her mellow. "Together, they kept me normal," she said.

Through all the drugs and drinking, Kathy has been married twice and has three children. But the two oldest now live with their father in Dallas, and the youngest lives with Kathy's brother in Baltimore.

The first of the 22 years Kathy spent homeless, she lived in the woods. She supported herself by foraging, selling blackberries, salal and pine cones. When she moved into the streets, it wasn't as easy to make a living.

In the cities, Kathy made money for food by donating blood, stealing when she had to, or by reliance on grocery stores that sometimes gave away old bread and vegetables. Even so, she knows about hunger. After days without food, she would feel as if her intestines might col-

lapse, "but they won't collapse if you keep enough water running through them somehow."

Kathy moved around the country. She stayed at missions or in the best public places she could find: a gas station rest room, under a bridge or overpass, in an abandoned car or in a ditch. She vividly recalls one stormy night with her youngest son, then three years old, when they slept in a phone booth in Albuquerque.

Kathy lingered in a city only when she felt she was losing too much weight. "If I stopped, I met a man and got a roof over my head for a while," she said.

Three of the men that Kathy met battered her. The last beat her regularly. His final attack was vicious enough to put her in a coma. "Who knows, he could have killed me if the cops hadn't pulled him off," she said. After she regained consciousness, Kathy had to look at her identification papers to discover who

she was. She was hospitalized for 20 days. Her attacker went to prison.

Even after she was released from the hospital, she continued drinking. For a year, she was in and out of treatment centers until, in the summer of 1982, she involuntarily was committed to the Pioneer Treatment Center at Sedro-Woolley. She remained locked up for eight months.

Following her release five months ago, she came to live at Agape. Kathy has been dry for one month and credits the support of Agape staff, the Community Alcohol Council and the strength of her religious beliefs for her break from drugs.

"Billy the Kid"

The man sat at a sidewalk table at the Casa Rosa coffee house on Commercial Street. The cream in his coffee caught in his uneven mustache. Blackened hands fished tobacco leaves from the seams of a leather pouch. He accumulated enough to light a pipe.

The shopping cart parked beside him had a bedroll on the lower rack, where dog food usually goes. Tarp scraps almost filled the basket, except a corner where a toy car was tucked, still in its carton.

The man, introducing himself, said his name was Billy the Kid. He said his occupation was, first, a federal judge, and then, "The Uncle Sam of the West Coast." He wore a brass badge pinned to one of several layers of shirts.

Uncle Sam-Judge-Billy the Kid said that he was 800 years old. He also said that he owns a house and furniture, but a local policeman said that Billy sleeps in dumpsters.

Gary Shields

Wanderlust brought Gary Shields out into the streets, but it isn't as he first imagined: "Living in the streets is not freedom, it's free choice," he said.

Gary grew up on a farm near

Moses Lake, Washington. After he graduated from high school in 1977, he went to college. Before his freshman year was through, however, he set out to travel.

Deciding where to go wasn't harder than flipping a coin; heads directed him south and tails sent him east. He visited Omaha and Portland, Sacramento and Miami, and places between.

For six years now, Gary has gone from town to town. He sleeps in a mission if the town has one, or if it doesn't, he finds a place, usually under a bridge, to unroll his sleeping bag.

Gary stays at the Light House Mission when he comes to Bellingham. He was here for almost three months this fall, and moved on before he could be pictured for this article.

The Reasons:

Millions of people are sleeping in streets, in doorways, under bridges and in gas station bathrooms. This isn't just in Delhi or Dacca or Luanda, but in Houston and Phoenix and Miami and Bellingham.

Kurt Vonnegut sketches the problem, in the case of shopping-bag ladies, in his book *Jailbird*:

"Sociologically, of course, this melodrama was as gripping as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* before the Civil War. Mary Kathleen CLooney wasn't the only shopping-bag lady in the United States of America. There were tens of thousands of them in major cities throughout the country. Ragged regiments of them had been produced accidentally, and to no imaginable purpose, by the great engine of the economy.

"People claimed to be investigating. Unspecified repairs were to be made at some future time."

Vonnegut's shopping-bag ladies are only a slice of America's homeless. According to the April issue of *GEO* magazine, "each year 2.5 million Americans are pushed out, priced out, or forced out of where they live." These are women and men; they are young and old and



He said his occupation was, first, a federal judge, and then, "The Uncle Sam of the West Coast." He also said that he owns a house and furniture, but a local policeman said that he sleeps in dumpsters.



Laird Fitzgibbons rummages through a back-alley dumpster for bottles, cans — anything that can be converted into cash.

middle-aged. The image of the homeless as exclusively the bag-lady, or the stubble-faced, gray old drunk, is largely a myth.

At the Light House Mission in Bellingham, a place where homeless men can stay for free, 74 percent of the 600 people who have checked in so far this year are less than 40 years old. At the Agape Christian Home, the mission's home for women, the age range is similar.

As the homeless vary in age, so, too, do they range in education and prior occupations. Of a sample of 84 homeless men who have stayed at the mission, 35 had high school educations and 11 had gone to college. Some had master's degrees. Thirteen had served in the military. Of the occupations listed, some

included: fire fighter, student, logger, office worker, antique dealer, school teacher, fish processor, laborer, musician and "itinerant thinker."

The reasons why these people are homeless are obscure. Vonnegut blames it on the "great engine of the economy." Carol Christopher, case manager at the Whatcom County Counseling Center, cautioned against drawing firm conclusions; value judgements are easily made. "People have choices," she said. However, unemployment, trauma in the home, alcoholism and mental illness are discernible reasons for homelessness.

Unemployment forces people not only from their homes but also from their home towns. People who

live in a depressed area go looking for greener pastures, Dave Ashton, chaplain at the Light House Mission, said. Canada often looks good to the job seekers, but because they haven't sufficient cash, they are turned away at the border. Destitute, they end up in Bellingham.

So far this year, of the 600 men who found shelter at the Light House Mission, about 50 percent were from other states. Ironically, four percent listed home addresses in Canada.

Whatever allows the "great engine of the economy" to produce the homeless doesn't confine itself to the mechanics of the marketplace. The homeless are also produced in the home.

The parent-child relationship can produce the homeless. An increasing number of the homeless are very young children whom parents can no longer tolerate. They are asked to leave. They travel, live in missions or on the streets.

The man-woman relationship can produce the homeless. Agape shelters three battered women a year. These are only women who are not married to their mates. Married women go to the Woman Care Shelter, and 350 of them ended up homeless, at least for a time, last year.

Elderly widows have it particularly rough. Some have never worked, and if they aren't eligible for social security, or they have no immediate family, they can't cope financially.

Elderly men sometimes can't cope, either. This year, 69, or 11 percent, of the men who slept at the mission were over 51.

A problem that cuts across the age spectrum and produces the homeless is substance abuse. A large percentage of the people at the mission and Agape abuse drugs and alcohol. Some became homeless by drinking away their holdings, Ashton said.

A second problem that ignores age and produces the homeless is mental illness. The mentally ill on the streets are the "unsocial or antisocial individuals," Ashton said. The man who calls himself Billy the Kid is "an antisocial," he said. Cap-

tain Kveven of the Bellingham Police said four to six such individuals roam the streets.

These are the people released from mental institutions to make room for violent patients, Roberta Melone, an Agape supervisor, said.

Another reason the mentally ill have been released is the deinstitutionalization of our mental health care system.

According to *GEO* magazine, "deinstitutionalization seemed a logical step once psychotropic (hallucinogenic) drugs were available to control the behavior of the emotionally disturbed. If patients no longer 'acted crazy,' far better to care for them in the community. So public mental hospitals were able to cut patient loads by nearly 75 percent between 1955 and 1979. Today, estimates of the chronically mentally ill outside institutions range from 800,000 to twice that number."

"It's a catch-22," explained Kveven. The disturbed receive medication that enables them to care for themselves, then they are released. They feel fine so they quit taking the medication, get worse, and then they don't know how to restart it.

Bellingham, as a community, doesn't know what to do with its homeless visitors who also are mentally ill. Police and fire stations frequently receive complaint calls. As Judith Brown of Bellingham's Department of Community Development explained, the police are called to remove a man sleeping on a downtown sidewalk, but the officer can't arrest him because he hasn't committed a crime. The man might be taken to the Whatcom County Detoxification Service facilities, but Detox can't help him because he has mental symptoms beyond just being drunk. Mental health can't keep him because he is drunk.

The mission can't keep the anti-social person because he can't adapt to group living. His symptoms must be acute before the Light House will turn him away. The mission kept a man who insisted on sleeping with a butter knife in each hand. They couldn't keep the man who enjoyed setting fires every-

where, Ashton said. Some of these people end up back on the streets.

Even though people here still sleep in the streets, Bellingham as a community has a comparatively good helping system.

Supported by the churches, private donations and by proceeds from the mission thrift store, the Light House Mission and the Agape Christian Home are the backbone of the system.

Residents there sleep in bay style dormitories. When the weather is cold and the mission's 50 beds are full, the floors are covered with bed rolls. No one is turned away for lack of space. Three meals a day are served, and clothing is provided, free of charge, from the mission store.

In order to stay, residents must follow the mission's 12 rules, which mostly address group living: No loud talking is allowed at night, regular showers must be taken, smoking is only allowed in designated areas, and housekeeping chores must be done. Residents are also required to attend daily chapel services. The mission "attempts to reach in, reshape and redevelop their lives, if they want it," Ashton said.

Besides Bellingham groups that support the mission's work, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, the Community Alcohol Council, the Salvation Army and Whatcom County Counseling Center, the city also has become interested in the homeless. It recently received a Department of Housing and Urban Development Block Grant. The City Council voted to spend \$46,700 of these funds on an emergency shelter for the mentally disturbed, such as Billy the Kid: "The people who just don't fit," Brown said.

Even though the churches, through the mission, the city and the support groups, are putting tremendous energy into addressing the problems of the homeless, they still remain. Is it, as Vonnegut suggests, the fault of the great engine of the economy, or something more basic to the human spirit? ●



Men in their 20's such as Linden Dorining (above) fill 34 percent of the Mission's beds, while men such as Laird Fitzgibbons (below), age 50 or older, are a minority.



Defying Normality

by Carol Hierck

"Black jeans and studs have crossed over into suburbia. Once you cross punks with the mainstream, you get a really popular product."

—Rick Greene, manager, punk boutique

Conscious that all eyes were upon him, he coolly strutted down a Vancouver, B.C. street. Tufts of red and blond hair bounced with the primal beat that emanated from the "ghetto blaster" he swung at his side.

His black T-shirt, emblazoned with a white skull, showed through his open, black, leather jacket that sparkled with metal studs. His black "stovepipe" jeans narrowed at the ankle, then disappeared into black, pointed boots. A silver dog collar slapped his ankle. A gold safety pin swung from his ear.

Whether he admits it or not, he is part of a new and thriving clique, the trashy and trendy, the fashionable and freakish — those known as punks.

Fashion, they will tell you, is of utmost importance to their scene. Punks work hard to calculate a look that will shock and offend. But, as with most fashions, the external is an expression of the internal. For many punks, wild clothes, gelled hair and dog collars are an attempt toward individuality or a protest against the current social norms.

Bambi, a Vancouver Community College student, was on her way to Luvafair nightclub. She said it is

those who dare to be different who relieve the monotony often associated with urban centers.

From Bambi's ear hung a spherical, black earring. Small patches of her hair, like her lips, she'd colored red. Her grey, wool overcoat hung loose about her waist. Black stovepipe jeans and black, pointed shoes completed her look.

"The city's boring. When I dress this way, it makes life more interesting," she said.

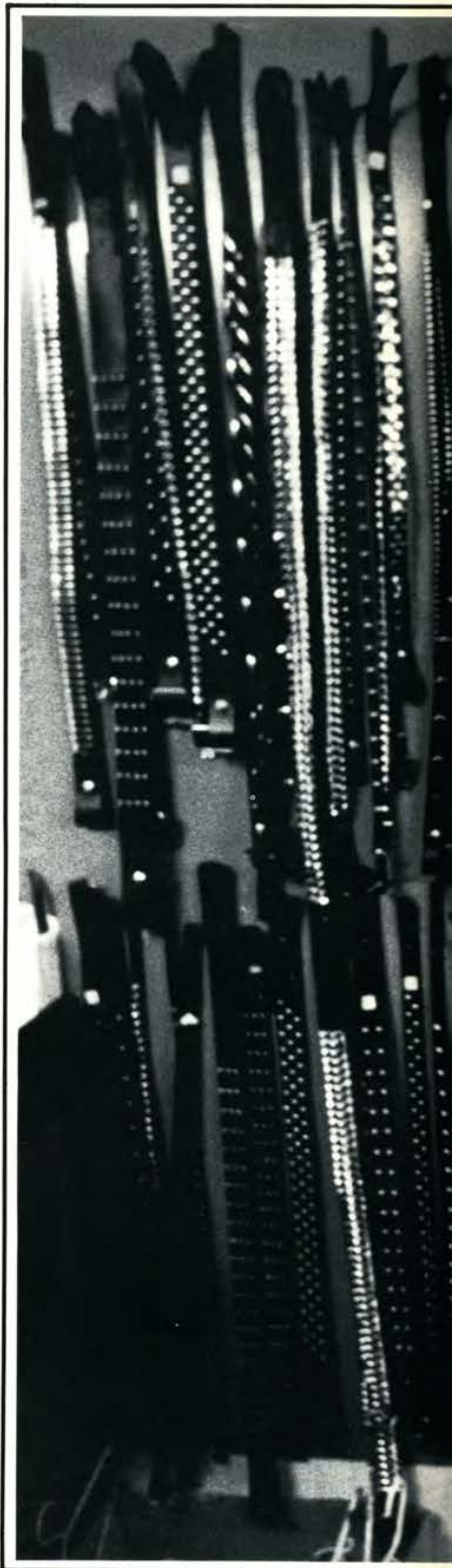
"You don't want to be like everyone else. Everyone wants to be different, so you do it by dressing. It distinguishes you from all the other normals running around here."

Larissa, also a student, defied the leather and studs of many punks. Her black, fleece pants, marked with white, snake-like swirls, she'd tucked carefully into two-toned, heeled boots. She matched these with a yellow, wing-shouldered blouse and white, wedding gloves. Her face glistened with make-up, her hair glowed with gel.

"Clothing states a lot about a person," she said as her heels met the pavement with a clack. "Basically, what you have to do is try and make fashion work for you so it makes a statement about what's inside. You try to dress outlandish and strange instead of ordinary and run-of-the-mill, so you're distinguished from the norm."

Larissa's sister Tamara, a fashion and music magazine editor, said she is more conscious than most of the changing fashions.

Right: Striped and checkered jeans, studded dog collars and wrap-around shades surround Black Market manager Rick Greene, as he pushes the latest in punk apparel in his Vancouver, B.C. shop.



Blair Kooistra



Tamara's hair was swept up into a blond mohawk. A blue, silken dress-coat wrapped about her waist and legs, stopping at her fishnet-stockinged ankles. As she spoke, a cigarette bounced and teetered between her burgandy-painted lips.

Coronet, a soon-to-be nightclub owner/manager, said people should accept and enjoy being different. Coronet wore a grey, zipper-front, one-piece jump suit. Over his right hand he'd slipped a black, leather glove. Glossy gel held his curly, dark hair behind his ears and down behind his neck.

"I'd like to send a shockwave through society and make them (normals) more aware of what life's about, that it's more than the 9-to-5 office rut. Everyone's so laid back, you have to jolt them, and dressing like this is one way of doing that," he said.

For others, the punk look is more than a struggle for individuality; it serves as a protest against society. Tammi was waiting for a friend outside Faces, a club similar to Luva-fair. Dressed in black, fishnet stockings, a black, leather jacket with zippered sleeves and a large collar pulled up over her ears, and wearing heavy eye and face makeup, she would probably have no trouble mingling with a group of street walkers. Her only accessories were the studs and safety pins lighting her jacket.

She said the black she wears symbolizes mourning for the death of the environment.

"I guess the black is my way of protesting against the loss of the natural environment from pollution, acid rain and the nuclear threat," she said. "People have got to start realizing that if we continue the way we're going, there won't be anything left. It's got to stop sometime, and if I can enlighten just one person, through my personal protest, maybe the word will get around."

Tammi said she started dressing punk about a year ago after attending a punk rock concert.

"I was listening to some of their songs, and they expressed such anger about what's happening to our society. Black was their way of

expressing the ultimate deviation from a society that professes to be so lily-white and pure," she said.

Mark, an unemployed waiter, said he dresses punk to protest the government and society. His attire consisted of black boots, a black shirt, black suit jacket, blue jeans and a round, gold earring in his left ear. He coiffed his short, blond hair so it stood upright on the top.

"Everyone wants to be different, so you do it by dressing. It distinguishes me from all the other normals . . ."

"It's a protest against society because people are so into themselves. They see people aren't the way they should be, and think we should therefore be annihilated from society. As for government, it's screwing everything around so that there's nothing to live for. They turn people into street people by cutting everything off," he said.

"If society would be more accepting, people wouldn't be so outrageous. But the way it stands now, the punks are saying, you can't accept it, so fuck you. Society has to learn to grow and be more receptive...."

Mark said he doesn't plan to change to suit society. "I was sick of being treated like a normal. You're not everybody, you're yourself. I couldn't care what people think. I'm doing what I want, and I'm going to continue doing it. People have got to realize they're not going to get away from punk. It will always be there."

One group that hopes the punk look will continue is the store owners and establishments that cater to punks.

Black Market on Granville Street is a store that specializes in punk fashions. In the store-front window, a black mannequin sports a white, mohawk haircut and shocking pink sunglasses. Dressed entirely in black leather, it is surrounded by the black vinyl of melted records.

Inside, loud, aggressive music

beats from the sound system while various symbols of punkhood surround and demand attention. Studded, leather belts and dog collars line one wall. A glass showcase filled with more collars and colorful buttons carrying statements such as, "Fuck the world, I want to get off," stops you when you enter. Another wall is lined with T-shirts, some printed with Elvis Presley silhouettes, others with crossbone patterns. The floor space is cluttered with racks of "unbusiness-like" suit jackets, as well as black and red, blue and yellow, striped and checkered jeans. Hood shoes, Beatle boots and other "toe killers" fill two other racks. For those who want to be even more daring, there's a unisex hair salon in the rear of the store.

Although the store has been in operation for only a year-and-a-half, manager Rick Greene says he thinks it is one of the more popular punk shops, catering to high school and university students.

"Most of my clientele want stove-pipe jeans and silver studs," Greene said. "Black jeans and studs have crossed over into suburbia. Once you cross punks with the mainstream, you get a really popular product."

But Greene is quick to distinguish between real punks and what he terms "pseudo punks."

"The real punk thing is not to have any money or a job and not support any business. That's why we don't get real punks in here. The pseudo punks shop here to be part of the trendy crowd," he said.

In a Sept. 25 article in *The Vancouver Sun*, Vancouver Museum's Ivan Sayers dismissed the look as a passing fad in North America, compared to that of the 'real' punks of England.

"Here, it's a game — 'Let's play dress-up.' It's a counter-culture fashion as much as hippiedom was," Sayers said.

Passing fad or not, the punks and the punk look have definitely added another dimension to contemporary fashion and thought. ●



“TAKE BACK THE NIGHT”

“It’s infuriating to have to fear the night, not to feel absolutely free to go anyplace, at any time.”

by Laurie Jervis

The last floor of lights went black in Wilson Library as I strode across Red Square, heading home. I had always liked walking at night, and the privacy about it that you can’t find in the day. Maybe it comes from the discrete kind of beauty one sees: the way the night measures a frosty breath or a halo gathers around the moon.

As I neared Arntzen Hall, a door slammed from deep within the concrete walls. *Who’s coming?* I thought, focusing into the darkness. I stepped faster now, feeling stiff, my hands, like fists, pushing deep into my coat pockets. When I reached the stairs, I paused, glanced back, but saw nothing.

“I’m OK, I’m safe,” I murmured. But my ears remained fine-tuned to

more suspicious sounds, and my eyes strained to see ahead along the path. I tried to sort the familiar shapes — trees, lamp posts, railings — from the unfamiliar. I tried to see through shadows.

“Don’t you remember?” a friend’s voice chided in my memory. “Never walk home alone in a strange place.”

But I have a right to walk anyplace.

"Don't hesitate to call me anytime you need a ride."

I just want to walk home in peace.

"You're asking for it if you walk home alone after dark."

That's crazy.

"No," the voice paused, then faded, "it's just crazy."

Wait. Who's...do I know him? ...he's catching up...move quickly...no, stop...let him pass...he might turn toward Fairhaven College...yes.

My breath stilled, and confidence returned — trickling back like a forgotten song — reinforcing my belief that I have a natural right to walk alone and unafraid at night.

Yet the truth is, a woman alone at night may, inadvertently, subject herself to assault, rape, or even death. As a result, women often become more sedentary once the sun goes down.

"The reality is that (some) men beat women up," Fairhaven professor Kathryn Anderson said. "(A) woman's fear is not irrational at all."

Anderson was a keynote speaker at Bellingham's 1982 "Take Back The Night" address, an annual event that takes place during Rape Awareness Week. "It's a public statement about sexual assault," Susan Meineke, administrative assistant of Whatcom County Crisis Services, said.

What are women doing to help each other? Calming the fear is the first step. This requires confidence, which ultimately leads to assertiveness — not always in the form of physical aggression — but simply in recognizing your right of mobility as a human being.

To exercise these rights, one may need something stronger than mental confidence: self-defense. This doesn't begin with a fistful of keys, held in a fist like claws, or the ability to pop a foot into a man's groin, or even with a weapon. It begins with the conviction that people have a right to move freely at all hours of the day or night.

Nancy Uding teaches a Bellingham self-defense workshop. Self-reliance after dark, or anytime, she said, begins with a healthy personal attitude about yourself. A woman must feel she is worth

defending — "worthy of self-defense."

Uding shows students a "real mixture" of skills — a continuum of attitudes, strong will, verbal assertiveness, the correct way to carry oneself and physical defenses — dodging, running, the use of "impromptu weapons" — pens and keys — how to break a hold, and painful offensive techniques.

"I have a natural right to walk alone and unafraid at night."

Specific defenses depend on the circumstances, Uding said. While resorting to physical resistance may become a survival necessity, one also may be able to talk one's way out of danger. Women should learn to quickly appraise an attacker, Uding said, and then deciding on the best defense technique will become automatic.

Once confident of their ability to walk alone, women have "so many options," Uding said. "In class, we emphasize the options...(we have) more to draw from."

Uding, a Huxley College student, walks alone a lot, usually "across town," and enjoys the darkness.

She also is skilled in self-defense.

She was a founding member of "Rising Fire," a Bellingham women's self-defense collective that began several years ago. Members taught the skills to each other, then to women outside of the collective. When the group disbanded, Uding continued to teach to "fill the demand...the need."

She said she would rather physically fight off an attacker than submit to rape. "It's infuriating" to have to fear the night, she said, not to feel absolutely free to go anyplace, at anytime.

Uding said the trouble begins with a society that says men should have power over women, and that women may be considered "less" than men.

Rape, Uding said, is the prime example of this. Rape is not an act of

sex, but an act of power and violence. "(Some) men will resort to rape to confirm their dominance over women." The problem, she said, is that male dominance is accepted — it is "normal."

Police statistics show that over the last 10 years, an average of 15 rapes are reported each year in Bellingham. But Cathy Charette, from Rape Relief, said only one out of 10 rapes committed nationwide is reported. (This would mean that during the past decade, more than 1,500 women here have been raped).

What exactly is "rape?" Washington State Law defines rape as excessive forced penetration of any orifice.

Two elements are necessary to establish rape: force and sexual intercourse without consent.

Charette said the public may have a distorted view of sexual assault. The most common scene is not the shadowy walkway where the attacker seizes his victim and pulls her into the bushes. The most common is "acquaintance" rape.

An example: A person meets another at a party, and they go home together. If one uses actual physical force, or verbal threats which result in victim consent because of fear, to gain sex, it is "acquaintance rape."

As Rape Relief advocates, Charette and the nearly 30 other volunteers aid victims of sexual assault. "We help in whatever way she (the victim) would like us to help — by taking her to the hospital, or by talking to her family."

"We want them to feel comfortable talking to us; we'll go at their pace. Some women have difficulty using the word 'rape.' We'll use their language."

After the shock, guilt is the initial reaction experienced by many rape victims, Charette said. The victim likely is afraid that "people will think she had a part in it, or that it was her fault." The victim also may be embarrassed and humiliated.

Surprisingly, anger usually is not one of the first responses to sexual assault. This powerful emotion shows up later, often after the victim has been counseled, or has

attended self-defense workshops. There, she may become close to other rape victims, and the interaction may bring out the "buried" feelings of revulsion and revenge.

Charette also teaches a rape prevention workshop, and, as does Uding, emphasizes personal attitudes.

Be alert and always know where you're going, she said. Think ahead — plan the areas you will pass through along the way. Soon the self-assurance becomes natural, and one doesn't spend the entire time looking over a shoulder. "You just know."

Charette said she also has felt frustrated by limits imposed on her freedom. "You do have the right to go anywhere you want, but it has to be tempered with reality, and being prepared and educated."

Education includes advice not to focus on "men in general," Charette said, but on suspicious behavior. For instance, excessive fear might label hitchhiking as an activity to avoid, but it's not hitchhiking per se, it's the circumstances that warrant caution, Charette explained.

"A woman is vulnerable in our culture, period."

A woman should be able to make her own choices about walking alone, or hitching a ride with strangers, although she also should remain aware of possible danger.

Anderson said that she doesn't go out running alone at night, nor does she walk to her office at Fairhaven College after dark unless she is "sure" that other people will be around. She envies her (male) colleagues who can enjoy the night; she said, "I don't feel comfortable (at night)."

Anderson currently is working within social movements promoting the "safety of both men and women at all times of the day."

Charette focuses her attention on aggression. "Today, women are feeling more comfortable about being aggressive, exercising their rights, and about saying no to unwanted advances. We know our personal rights." And if one needs support,

that's where Rape Relief workshops can help, she said.

In one of the attitude exercises Charette teaches, she asks women to "categorize" all the men in their lives. Each student fills in names on a chart, placing a man under headings such as slight acquaintance, classmate, housemate, social acquaintance, good friend, and intimate friend or lover, she explained.

Next, each woman describes the behavior she would accept from each of the males — a touch on the shoulder from an acquaintance, or a backrub from a male housemate.

The woman then is asked to list her reaction if a male in any category broke the acceptable boundaries she had mentally set for him, and, finally, how much she would take from the "offending" male before terminating the relationship altogether.

Charette said the exercise is a new step for some. "Women are

trained to put up with a lot. They get negative input concerning aggressiveness. The male response might be 'You're too sensitive, bitchy...what's your problem?...I'm just kidding around,' " Charette said.

Women must learn to trust their inner voice. "If someone says you are too sensitive (to his advance), then toughen yourself." Women who grew up hearing that it was not feminine to act aggressive now are excited with their own physical power. They discover they are stronger than they first believed, she said.

"We don't push it (physical aggression) but simply present it as another option women have been denied for a long time."

A common response of women in self-defense training is, "I didn't realize I was so strong," Charette said. "It's exciting to see the change, because it's the attitude, and wherever they are, it will show." ●

Self-Defense

If you are physically threatened, what would you do? The following are some basic suggestions for self-defense from *Against Rape* by Andra Medea and Kathleen Thompson.

Run. If you sense a confrontation, don't feel foolish about running away. Run first — you can decide about foolishness later.

Scream. Once you know that an attack is imminent, scream. It will clear your head, start the adrenaline going, and perhaps scare off the attacker.

Kicks. Your legs are the strongest part of your body. Your best target is his knee. A glancing kick across it, or a kick up under it, is likely to knock the knee out of position.

Fists. Clench your hand with the thumb outside, keeping your wrist straight, not bent, and aim for the vulnerable points of his upper body: the throat and head.

Weapons. If he has a knife, get your coat off and wrap it around your arm as a shield. Don't try arguing with a man who has a gun. Instead, concentrate on being calm and rational.

In a violent confrontation with a rapist there is no easy way out. But if it is practical to fight, you should know how to fight effectively.

For more information on self-defense call Rape Relief: 676-1175.

Savvy Vegetarian Eateries

by Steve Manthe

One Earth

One Earth, the sole purely vegetarian eatery in Bellingham, is dedicated to, among other things, community activism, and sponsors Sunday Benefit Nights for groups such as CISPES (Citizens In Solidarity with the People of El Salvador) and Whatcom County Child Care Services.

While community action is important, cooking good Mexican food is not neglected either. If you want a place where it's possible to eat cheaply and well without meat, then this is your hideaway. One Earth serves such south-of-the-border favorites as enchiladas (stuffed with cheeses, refried beans and green chiles), chiles rellenos (green chiles loaded with cheese and fried in egg batter) and tamale pie. All of the dinners include chips and hot sauce, brown Spanish rice and refried beans.

Beer and wine, as well as fresh juices and herbal teas, are available.

The menu also offers a guacamole or a taco salad. For the starving student, all-you-can-eat-nights are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, with favorites such as tacos, enchiladas and burritos for \$3.50.

Prices for dinners are less than \$4. One Earth, which shares space with Lyn's restaurant, is on Cornwall Street across from Safeway. Hours are 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., seven days a week. Take-outs are available for 25 cents extra.

The Oasis

If you want freedom of choice, this is the place, with eight meatless and 11 meat sandwiches from which to select. Vegetarian sandwiches include a "Mushroom Melt," "Hawaiian Delight" and an "Avocado Mushroom Melt". You also may choose the type of cheese (provalone, jack, Swiss or cheddar) and type of bread (whole wheat, sourdough, dark rye or bagel).

If what you desire is not on the menu, the Oasis will create a sandwich on request. Salads work the same way; you can choose from five varieties or the cook will create one for you. The soup specials of the day, one of which is vegetarian, are posted on the front counter. Friday is clam chowder day.

Prices at the Oasis are less than \$4.50 for sandwiches with meat, and \$4.25 or less for vegi sandwiches and salads, and \$1.25 for soups. You can call in an order ahead of time. The Oasis, located across from the Herald building on State Street, is open from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Uncle Chen's

Although a little out of the way for some, a trip to Uncle Chen's is well worth the extra mile.

The restaurant, while not exclusively vegetarian, accommodates those who are. Some dishes can be ordered minus the meat, although vegetarians can do equally well with entrees such as "Buddhist Delight" — a blend of waterchestnuts, bamboo shoots and other vegetables in a mildly-tangy white sauce, "Bean Curd and Chinese Cabbage Casserole," or "Lover's Eggplant" — chunks of eggplant stir-fried in a hot, brown sauce. Some dishes, such as "Sauteed String Beans," or some seafoods, are seasonal, with prices dependent upon the availability of fresh, local produce and fish. The menu also warns of entrees that are peppery or hot.

Prices for dinners range from \$4.25 for some vegetable and rice dishes up to \$7.50 for smoked duck. A lunch special for \$2.95 features a dozen items as well as four soups. Of these, one entree and one soup are vegetarian.

Uncle Chen's, located one mile east of the freeway on Iowa Street, is open seven days a week, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., Sunday through Thursday, and from 11 a.m. to midnight, Friday and Saturday. Take-outs are available.



Photographs by Casey Madison



Left: An assortment of newspapers accompany the espresso coffee and homemade Greek pastries at Casa Rosa. Above: At

the Oasis, over-the-counter specials include 19 varieties of sandwiches, or an offer to custom-make one at your request.

Old Town Cafe

From the burnholes in the faded red tablecloths, to the comic rat buttons for sale on the back wall, and the unusually named entrees on the menu, the Old Town Cafe has a comfortable and unpretentious character. Coffee lovers will enjoy waking up to steaming rich cups of Tony's coffee, at 50 cents for two cups or a dollar for an hour.

For breakfast, the Old Town offers a number of enticing omelettes, including the rich, three-egg, "California Omelette," which is plumped with avocado and sour cream. Or, a starving student might try the four-egg omelette — good to split with a friend — as well as plate-sized whole wheat pancakes and golden sourdough French toast.

The lunch menu offers a number of refreshing alternatives to standard restaurant fare. Diners can choose between hot sandwiches such as the "Funky Special" (grilled cheese and avocado), or the "Mickey Ratz Favorite" (grilled seasoned Tofu — bean curd), as well as a mushroom, sprout and tomato sandwich or vegetarian chili.

Prices are in the neighborhood of \$3.50, although for a feast such as the four-egg omelette, expect the \$5 range. The Old Town Cafe is on Holly Street, nestled between Scorpio's second-hand store, and Bellingham Bay Collectibles. Hours are 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday.

Casa Rosa

Known for its tantalizing desserts, delectable pastries and six different kinds of espresso, Casa Rosa also serves out-of-the-ordinary vegetarian sandwiches, salads and traditional Greek dishes. Exotic sandwiches include a "Nutburger," with a patty of crushed sunflower seeds, garbanzo beans, walnuts and almonds tucked between two slices of onion and a herb bagel. If you're a cheese lover, try the "Quasi-Gormand," with slices of smoked cheddar melted over sliced artichoke hearts and mushrooms, all served on whole wheat bread. Other popular entrees are Greek dishes such as Spanakopita — spinach, onions, ricotta and feta cheese wrapped in a crispy pastry, or Tyropetes — fennel-flavored cheese stuffed into a flaky shell and topped with toasted sesame seeds. All sandwiches and hot entrees come with a small salad. You can also choose between a number of specialty salads, or try one of the soup specials.

Prices for all Casa Rosa entrees are less than \$4. Hours are 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., Monday through Friday, and from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Sunday.

The Upper Crust

Tucked into a red brick courtyard behind the Holly Street Parkade, and sporting a small sidewalk sign and easy-to-miss gold lettering above the door, the Upper Crust can be a little difficult to find. Nevertheless, this is Bellingham's most popular lunchtime spot, and it's a good idea to reserve a table before you visit.

If you're in the mood for a meal that's a bit more exotic than burgers and fries, The Upper Crust is the place to go. Sink your teeth into one of the variety of meatless entrees, such as "Mushroom Pie" (with a tang of sour cream), and "Mediterranean Quiche" (with mushrooms, zucchini, green pepper and cheese) — or munch a "Garden Sandwich with Cheese." The menu has a number of vegetarian soups to choose from, including sour cream potato, tomato lentil and curried zucchini.

The Upper Crust makes all of its own baked goods, from pies, tortes and cakes to croissants, at its Cornwall Street Bakery, where the hours are Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. The restaurant's hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., with lunch served from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch prices are less than \$4, and take-outs are available.





kurt jones

On the Hunt

Short non-fiction
by Stan Holmes



The captain hollered "Let it go!" Within seconds, two of my crewmates pulled the Pelican release and cast me and my 16-foot skiff into the gray water. I turned the skiff around and steered away from the "Cascade" — a 58-foot Bellingham purse seiner — and her crew of five.

The "Cascade" bobbed and bounced in the rolling sea, spilling 245 fathoms of corks, web and lead line. Hauling the net behind me, I watched the line of yellow and white corks unswirl and lengthen, and the size of the crew and the captain shrink into miniature. More than three dozen seiners surrounded ours, each of them either dumping skiffs, towing nets or racing for the best set. My job was to safely guide our net through this maze of maritime insanity.

Towing a \$30,000 net wasn't an easy responsibility. Especially when the crew looked like ants and the waves looked like hills coming up from behind. Especially, too, when it was my first time driving a skiff in southeast Alaska.

At that particular moment, as the skiff coughed and spit and the diesel engine whined in my ears, I knew the insecurity of being committed to something I knew little about. Earlier in the year I had decided to go fishing in Alaska. The romance of fishing on the high seas had gotten the best of me. Not to mention the lure of big money,

which I had heard passed through the hands of fishermen with the same frequency as rain in the Northwest. Now, as I tried to buck the waves off the west coast of Noyes Island, I began to wonder if I hadn't gotten more of one and none of the other.

Noyes Island lies a couple of hundred miles west of Ketchikan. There, large rockpiles thrust out of the sea like medieval turrets. The coastline resembles a battered fortress: rocky, towering and crumbling. Westerly winds gust up to 60 knots there, forcing skippers to be cautious.

Unfortunately for first-timers like myself, Noyes Island was where the salmon were. It certainly wasn't my first choice. Moreover, it was a rude awakening to Alaska fishing, and since then, I have thought more about my *real* fishing experience.

Before Alaska, I had spent a total of 12 days fishing in Puget Sound. I could barely patch web; I had rudimentary knowledge of fishing knots; I was worried about seasickness, and I was scared. My attributes, on the other hand, were desire, strength, unlimited enthusiasm, a need to make money and a new English B.A. from Western. Hardly what you'd call solid fishing skills.

To further complicate matters, the skipper let me drive the skiff, a job usually reserved for a more experienced crewman. I soon

learned why knowledge was necessary. If I made a mistake, such as tangling the net in the prop, or missing the exchange of the tow line to the main boat, we could lose hours, and possibly the entire day.

Luckily, I did not commit any major sins; however, I made some minor blunders. At first, I towed too slowly. Then, I slammed the skiff against the larger boat when I handed off the tow line. Later, I closed too early. I didn't keep the net wide open like a scoop, but instead, I narrowed the opening, which caused fewer fish to enter. The worst embarrassment of all, though, was forgetting to hook the tow line to the net. After the captain released my skiff, I motored off without the net. Half a dozen crews watched me from the other seiners waiting turns.

My skipper, Frank Mustappa, was from what you might call the "Old School." He did not believe in CB radio contact between the skiffman and the seiner. His method was a system of hand signals and body contortions. After each set, I could tell by the skipper's physical movements whether I had performed adequately. If he glared or waved his arms wildly, he was upset. If he was indifferent or bored, then I was OK.

When we were on Mustappa's boat, democracy was non-existent. He was king and we were his serfs. He reigned over his 58 feet of sover-

eign property with a dry, caustic wit. Mustappa had the ability to penetrate our weaknesses, and he was not shy about abusing his privilege — a psychological war had been declared as soon as we untied from Squalicum Harbor.

Although we, at first, knew little of his idiosyncrasies, his true personality surfaced when he announced the first day with an ironic smile, "the party's over."

As a crewmember, I quickly learned that no one could perform a task perfectly. And if I did happen to do my job well, I was never thanked or acknowledged.

We usually spent half the week out to sea. Two of those days were actual openings, where we were allowed to fish. Otherwise, we spent most of our time shuttling between fishing grounds and towns for supplies.

A two-day opening was comparable to a five-day work week when you add up the hours. We'd usually begin at 3 a.m. and fish until sunset. Then we'd unload at a tender anchored in one of the nearby coves. Sometimes we wouldn't unload until midnight or later. On days like that, we'd return immediately to the fishing grounds and work straight through the next day.

The (actual) purse seining process is one of the more complicated ways to catch fish. It involves a larger main boat, a net 245 fathoms long (1470 feet) and a seine skiff used to tow the net, which makes a circle around the school of fish.

After we'd run one set of the net, that was usually less than an hour, Mustappa would signal for me to close. I'd tow the net toward the seiner, meet it halfway, then pass the tow line to the men on deck. They'd fasten it to a slow-turning winch.

Mustappa ran the hydraulic gears

and watched the purse line, which pulled up the bottom of the net. Slowly, the net traveled up through the power block high on the mast, then descended back to the stern, where the three deck hands (Doug Puterbaugh, Jamie Reagan and George Moiser) would stack it into three piles — corks, web and lead lines. Eventually, the net's contents lay on the deck in a jumping, silver mass.

At the end of a fishing trip, the crew on deck usually felt muscle cramps in their fingers and forearms, their faces sometimes stung from the jellies, and their upper bodies ached. I, too, was fatigued, but mentally fatigued. At night I would wake up pushing my mate's bunk because I thought I had driven the skiff into the net, and I was trying to push it away. The crew liked to joke about my "skiff nightmares."

After two weeks of fishing, I couldn't understand why anyone enjoyed spending 60 days away from home, working to one's mental and physical limit, living on board with five people in cramped, stuffy quarters and gambling on the chance that fish might or might not exist underneath the keel of a boat.

Yet, benefits did exist. I was intrigued with southeastern Alaska's auspicious landscape: the hidden and unexpected inlets where we unloaded our catch; the mountains that snagged the storm clouds until they'd lighten and blow inland; the myriad islands with roads that did not connect, but simply ended at the water's edge. One usually traveled by plane, boat or foot. The land provided little choice.

Working the gear on a seiner was at times grueling labor. But it had its advantages. First, if one worked fast and furiously, and was lucky, one could bring home \$5,000 to \$10,000 in one season. Second, it's

the ever-changing sea that turns mundane work into adventure. The sea lives by its own dictates, and making a livelihood from it manifests some clear risks. For instance, if I let my mind wander for even a moment when I was working a set, I may have been hurt, maybe seriously. I thrived on this danger. That, along with the money, is the lure of new fishermen and the impetus for the returning ones.

Other attractions were the coastal towns. Whatever the location, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Wrangell or Craig, it was a sure bet that the town's taverns would be alive with fishermen. Taverns provided an escape from the boats and a chance to shake out the tension. Often the fishing crews gathered there to swap stories and grumble about their skippers.

But there was one time, toward the end of our tenure, when the entire "Cascade" crew felt an unusual tug of comradery with "Frankie" Mustappa. It was at the Potlatch tavern in Ketchikan, and we were drunk. I remember the rain was pelting down hard on the roof then, and inside, rumors of a bigger storm passed down the bar.

The four of us sat with Frankie, downing Bloody Marys. And with what seemed to be a tear in his eye, he told us about his friend "Stretch," killed when the "Providence" sank while fishing in southeast Alaska. Stretch, he said, would always remark "we're on the hunt," when the crew worked well together and when the boat was "onto" fish.

"We're on the hunt, Stan; we're on the hunt, George; we're on the hunt, Jamie; we're on the hunt, Doug." Frankie repeated these words time after time that day. It didn't matter though; it was what we wanted to hear. ●

The Sweet Smell of Success

by Scott Ansley

...golden hills of wood chips, steaming aluminum smoke stacks, clicking train tracks and rumbling freight cars, foreign cargo ships and swinging cranes, red brick buildings and a 5-acre boulder-fringed "lagoon..."

What is it? Obviously, it's Bellingham's major industrial link with the rest of the world: Georgia-Pacific's pulp and paper plant.

As a robust, 24-hour producer of essential paper products, Georgia-Pacific is the city's largest industrial employer, with 1,200 workers. The paper plant rolls out 215 tons of 21 different paper products on any given day, and is the sole supplier of M.D. toilet tissue, the West Coast's best selling brand.

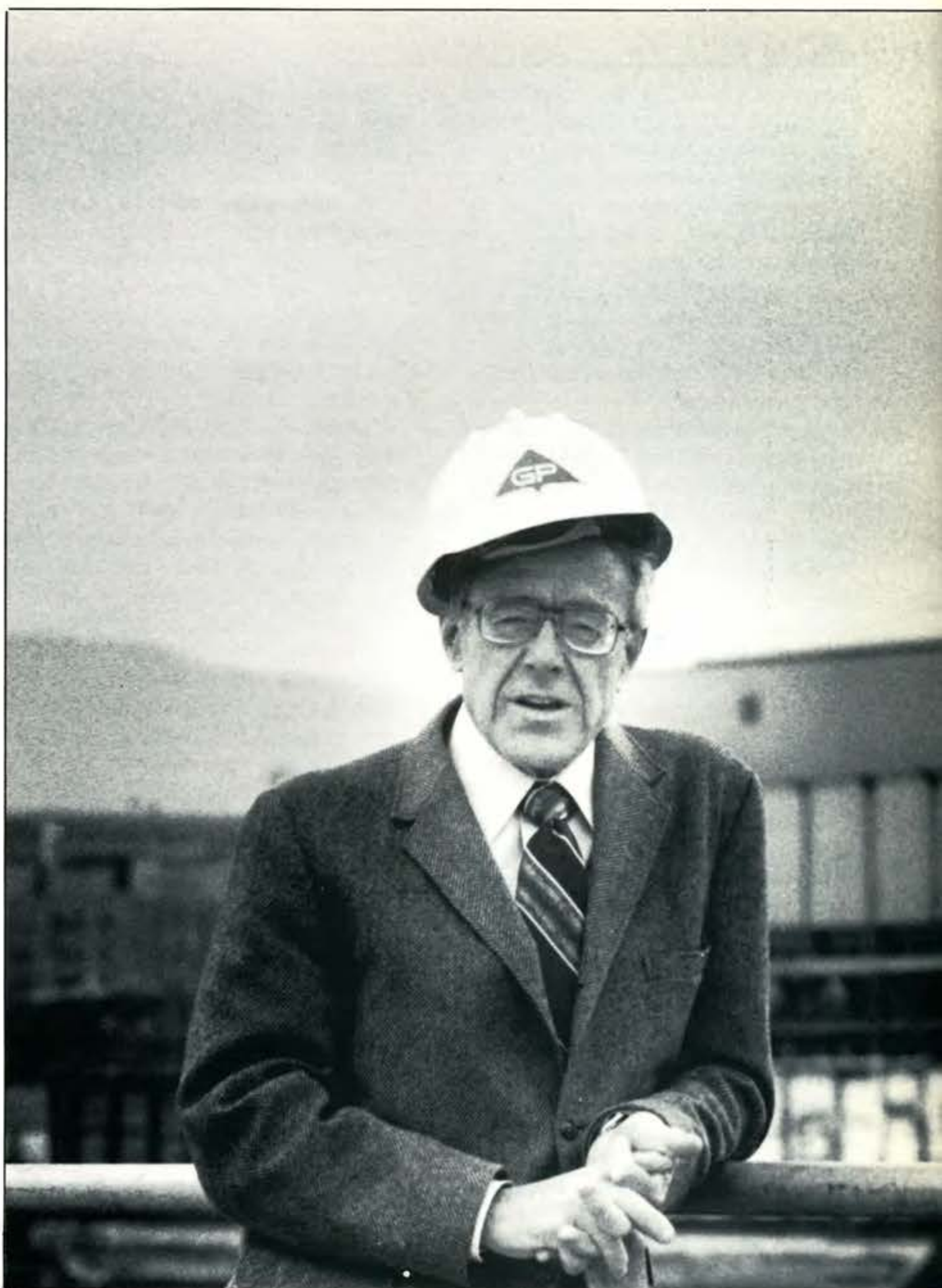
The pulp portion of the plant manufactures high quality pulp for photographic and bond paper. Of the 600 tons produced daily, 400 are shipped to plants in Pacific Rim countries, including Japan.

Besides making life more convenient, Georgia-Pacific also makes waste. How the industry has managed its waste is a "touchy" topic for some people. Especially controversial are the odors that waft from the stacks, and the lagoon.

Industry officials talk carefully about them. For one thing, they say, what smells like rotten eggs to one person ("just awful") can smell like burnt coffee to another ("not bad — you get used to it").

Orman Darby, Georgia-Pacific's public relations representative, believes people might react differently to the company's air emissions if they understood the pulping process — and how much the company has done to improve the quality of Bellingham's air and water.

Georgia-Pacific, in short, has "cleaned up its act" since buying



Warren Mowrie, environmental director for Georgia-Pacific, said the infamous smell is due to

the original plant from Pacific Pulp and Paper Company in 1973, Darby said.

When it comes to spending money and turning a bad situation into a good one, Georgia-Pacific probably deserves a lot of respect, Glen Hallman, director of the Northwest Air Pollution Authority, said. He described Georgia-Pacific as a leader in the elimination of air pollution.

"Times have changed. It's the same with emission control," Darby said. "We have reduced the sulphur

dioxide by 90 percent, but people notice it more now. The air is so clean now that when the pulp digester acts up or a gasket breaks, people detect the smell immediately. They complain."

Hallman, a Bellingham resident since 1954, concurs with much of Darby's sentiment. "It's true that it was a lot worse before G.P. bought the plant. There used to be one foot of soot, from the hog fuel boilers, in front of Bellingham businesses each morning. Merchants shoveled it up. It was awful."



accumulation of lignin "sludge" which rises from the bottom of the 38-acre lagoon in hot weather.

During the 1970s, when air and water emission standards were first strictly enforced, Georgia-Pacific could proudly boast that it had eliminated more than 90 percent of its waste. Scientists and businessmen devised ways to refine and market 97 percent of its biggest waste product, lignosulfonate, or lignin for short. Lignin is a natural binder for the cellulose fibers in wood. During the production process, lignin is removed from the pulp as a black liquid.

Until 1979, however, lignin flowed

along with waste water into Bellingham Bay.

Today, Georgia-Pacific is the world's largest producer of lignin, a "nice" substance, Darby said. Lignin is used to make dozens of commercial products, including artificial vanilla, L-Dopa (the drug used to treat Parkinson's Disease), and food supplements for livestock.

By the 1970s, sulphur dioxide emissions, the by-products of the the pulp digester process, also had been reduced by 90 percent. Darby attributes the change to structural

improvements.

"We made a lot of changes in the plant. We modernized, fine-tuned (the operations). That eliminated more sulphur dioxide than the 'scrubbers' (air filters mandated by the Environmental Protection Agency — EPA)," Darby said.

"We realized, long before the EPA came in, that it was wasteful and costly to let sulphur escape...We haven't just responded to regulations. We have a philosophy that I have been stressing in our ads lately: Efficiency and a pleasant environment work very well together. A highly-tuned machine will run (better) with less wasted."

Hallman, although acknowledging Georgia-Pacific's foresight in eliminating pollution, thinks the "efficiency-environment" theme is also hype.

"It sure is better than it was. But G.P. likes to say they spent millions for the environment. I think community pressures, the environmental movement and government have forced industry to change. Georgia-Pacific's officials foresaw the environmental regulation. They knew it was coming so they prepared for it. When it did come they could say they did it for the environment. Still, it's to Georgia-Pacific's credit that they did," he said.

Also obscured by public relations is Hallman's belief that Georgia-Pacific has "foot-dragged" in spending the millions required to eliminate another 7 to 10 percent of the pollution, a step required by government.

For example, the lagoon in the bay is a secondary treatment plant for the three percent of lignin that Georgia-Pacific chooses not to commercially extract. "It would be too expensive to extract that tiny amount," Darby said. Although the amount of lignin released into Bellingham Bay was a fraction of the previous amount, it was enough to hamper the eventual recovery of Bellingham Bay.

The digestion of lignin requires oxygen, making the process competitive with other forms of biological life. "It's just like if you put a banana peel in the water. It takes oxygen to dissolve it," Darby

Blair Kooistra

explained.

Georgia-Pacific was late in stopping the dumping of lignin and in starting the lagoon, and was fined \$400,000 by the Washington Department of Ecology and the EPA. The fine was paid in the form of a donation by Georgia-Pacific to the Maritime Heritage Park, Hallman said. The sign outside the park's entrance shows Georgia-Pacific as a "supporter" of the park.

The air scrubbers, used to filter the sulphur from air emissions, also represent a cost unpaid by Georgia-Pacific before the government regulation, Hallman said.

The Northwest Air Pollution Authority monitors Georgia-Pacific's daily sulphur dioxide emissions at a station on Chestnut Street, across from the plant. Besides checking the emission levels against federal and state emission limits, the agency has its own limit: Georgia-Pacific cannot allow more than .8 parts per million of sulphur dioxide to escape from its smokestacks during a five-minute interval.

During a nine-month period, (from Nov. 1982 to August) Georgia-Pacific reported 22 incidents when failures in the plant may have caused pollution violations. Fewer than 30 persons bothered to file a complaint, however. "It's not surprising," Hallman mused. "Whether anyone smells it depends on the wind and the ambient air temperature. If there is a (higher) temperature everyone smells the sulphur. It just depends."

Georgia-Pacific's most notorious odor has, since 1979, been a perennial mystery and brings the most complaints (33 in four days during summer 1983) to the authorities. The reported odor is similar to sewage, and its source is Georgia-Pacific's lagoon, Hallman said. Darby and other industry officials have, however, blamed the smell on other sources, including the tideflats and the Post Point Sewage Treatment Facility, but privately admit the lagoon is responsible, Hallman said.

Early this year, Georgia-Pacific officials announced in *The Bellingham Herald* that the industry

had, in fact, confined the problem. Their explanation: The biological digestion of lignin by bacteria had ceased during the summer weather because of an "overdemand for oxygen." The company installed two more generators, for a total of five, to blow oxygen into the lagoon.

"When it comes to spending money and turning a bad situation into a good one, Georgia-Pacific probably deserves a lot of respect."

**—Glen Hallman, director,
Northwest Air Pollution
Authority**

When the odor returned last summer, from June 24-29, "people read in the *Herald* that G.P. attributed the smell to the tideflats. The readers got mad because G.P. promised to solve the problem. It worked against the company," Hallman said.

Warren Mowrie, Georgia-Pacific's environmental director, explained that the smell is due to the accumulation of lignin "sludge," which rises from the bottom of the lagoon in the hot weather. "That, combined with the oxygen demand, probably created the problem. But we can counter that by beginning to aerate the lagoon earlier so the sludge won't build up."

Hallman questions this idea's truth. "I know they're fine-tuning the lagoon, but the problem has to stop." Hallman and the Department of Ecology plan to meet with Georgia-Pacific officials this winter to review steps for prevention of the summer smell. "They better have a plan that makes sense," he said.

Environmental laws allow the authorities to regulate air emissions having an "acute" effect on peoples' well-being, Hallman said. The emissions don't have to cause actual physical illness before the authorities step in, but are considered at a serious level when they aggravate existing health problems, or cause inconvenience to businesses.

"Proving that an odor is depriving you of your business isn't easy. But it's done. It's not hard to prove a lot in G.P.'s case," Hallman said.

When a pulp digester malfunctioned in May 1983, 18 people complained, six of whom were business-owners in downtown Bellingham. "We took a survey of the businessmen, and they said people wouldn't shop because of the (sulphur dioxide) smell, which smells like burnt matches," Hallman said.

Despite the "breakdown," Georgia-Pacific was not fined. State law allows Hallman to fine a company only for repeated failures to comply, or for negligence. He fined the industry the maximum (\$250) for particulate emissions as recently as August, because the problem occurred repeatedly.

One odor Hallman has not recently fined Georgia-Pacific for is the "tunafish smell," which hovers around the plant, and, "from time to time," can be detected downwind of Georgia-Pacific. The source of this is a combination of lignin and alcohol emissions, well below the emission limits. "The smell is not unpleasant once you get used to it. Some people don't like it, but you're going to always have some who don't," Darby said. Hallman believes that once people become familiar with a certain Georgia-Pacific odor, they may not complain as frequently.

Perhaps. But when compared with other pulp and paper mills, Georgia-Pacific is one of the better neighbors Bellingham residents could have. The irony, Hallman said, is that the plant should never have been built so close to a business district and neighborhoods.

"The bulk of G.P.'s emissions would have gone unnoticed if it had been built where Intalco (Aluminum Corp.) is, at Cherry Point. Intalco has a bufferzone of 700,000 acres," Hallman said.

Intalco can belch a pretty sizeable burp, and only the workers would notice.

A tickle in Georgia-Pacific's throat is enough to send most of the Bellingham community, and the government, calling for a doctor. ●



Blair Kooistra

"We took a survey of the businessmen, and they said people wouldn't shop because of the smell." —Glen Hallman

